



Chapter 6

Plan Implementation

Personnel Needs

In FY 1999 the staff of DeSoto NWR consisted of 19 full- and part-time positions equal to 18.6 FTE's (Full-Time Equivalents):

C	refuge manager (1)
C	wildlife biologist (1)
C	refuge operations specialist (2)
C	park ranger (chief of visitor services and protection) (1)
C	outdoor recreation planner (1)
C	museum curator (1)
C	museum technician (1)
C	full-time park ranger (1)
C	part-time park ranger (2)
C	full-time law enforcement ranger (1)
C	administrative officer (1)
C	administrative technician (1)
C	maintenance leader (1)
C	engineering equipment operator (1)
C	automotive worker (1)
C	tractor operator (1)
C	maintenance mechanic (1)

While the Refuge currently enjoys a fully staffed organization chart, achieving the goals and objectives of this CCP will require the following additional staff which will be reflected in an updated RONS database:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Strategy Number</u>	<u>RONS Project #</u>	<u>FTE's</u>
Biological technician (2 seasonal positions for woodland restoration)	1.4.1.4	00001	0.75
Biological technician (1 seasonal position for grassland restoration)	1.4.2.5	97011	0.35
Custodian (1 full-time position for Visitor Center)	3.1.1.10	98001	1.00
Museum technician (1 full-time position for Visitor Center)	3.1.1.10	00007	1.00



<u>Position</u>	<u>Strategy Number</u>	<u>RONS Project #</u>	<u>FTE's</u>
Environmental education specialist (1 full-time position)	3.1.1.10	00004	1.00
Biological technician (1 seasonal position in sport fishery)	3.3.1.8		0.35
Volunteer coordinator (1 full-time position)	4.1.1.3		1.00
Biological technician (1 seasonal position in Private Lands Program)	4.3.1.7		0.35
Law enforcement ranger (1 full-time position)	2.1.1.2		1.00
TOTAL FTE's			6.80

Funding

Currently, a backlog of maintenance and equipment needs exists. Under current conditions the needs, which are recorded in the deferred Maintenance Management System (MMS), total \$3,708,000 (see Appendix C). These needs will continue under this plan.

The Refuge Operating Needs (RONS) projects identified in this plan describe new projects and total \$4,063,000 in the first year, of which \$3,046,000 are one-time expenses and \$1,016,000 are recurring (see Appendix C). These projects are in addition to the base operating budget of the refuge, which was approximately \$1.2 million in fiscal year 1999.

Step-down Management Plans

At present, DeSoto NWR has 21 step-down management plans. The following plans require no revision to implement the CCP, although they may require periodic updates as indicated in the CCP or elsewhere:

- < ADP Security Plan
- < Bertrand Conservation Laboratory Safety Plan
- < Crowd Control Plan
- < Headquarters Shelterbelt Management Plan
- < Disaster Preparedness Plan for the Bertrand Collection
- < Disease Plan
- < Law Enforcement Plan
- < Safety Plan
- < Search and Rescue Plan
- < Strategic Plan for Accessibility
- < Traffic Control Plan



Existing step-down plans that do need some level of modification or updating to implement the direction of the CCP, or that require periodic review and revision under the CCP, include the following:

<u>Plan</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
< Bottomland Reforestation Plan	FY 2003
< Cropland Management Plan	FY 2001
< DeSoto Lake Monitoring Plan	FY 2002
< Fishery Management Plan	FY 2001
< Forest Management Plan	FY 2003
< Grassland Management Plan	FY 2002
< Habitat Management Plan for Endangered Species	FY 2003
< Refuge Hunting Plan	FY 2001
< Snow Goose Hunting Plan	FY 2001
< Wildlife Inventory Plan	FY 2002
< Moist Soil-Water Management Plan	FY 2003

In addition, three new step-down management plans are needed:

<u>Plan</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
< Invasive Species Monitoring and Control Plan	FY 2002
< CCP Inventory and Monitoring Plan	FY 2001
< Cultural Resources Management Plan	FY 2003

Partnership Opportunities

We plan to maintain and amplify our existing partnerships with the Iowa office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Midwest Regional Office of the National Park Service, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Nebraska Department of Game and Parks, Harrison County Conservation Board and other County Conservation Boards, Iowa State University Extension, Papio-Missouri River NRD, Midwest Interpretive Association, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, Omaha Chapter of the National Audubon Society, local chapters of the Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of America, certain African-American churches in Omaha, the Omaha Indian Tribe, and 4-H Clubs.

In a partnership with a host of agencies and scores of private landowners known as Partners for Wildlife, DeSoto NWR carries out wetlands restoration on private lands in an 18-county area through our Private Lands Program. We are fully committed to maintaining and expanding these joint endeavors.

We have worked with cooperative farmers implementing innovative approaches to farming on the refuge for four decades. Although most farming within DeSoto's boundaries will be phased out over the next 15 years, we will continue to cooperate with area farmers on sustainable agricultural practices and to resolve issues of mutual concern between the refuge and the local farming community.



DeSoto Refuge also cooperates with students, teachers, professors, and researchers from a number of educational institutions ranging from elementary school through university graduate programs. In addition to the hundreds of K-12 classes that visit DeSoto every year, we have partnered in one way or another with the following institutions of higher learning: Creighton College, Clarkson College, Drake University, Dordt College, Westmar College, the University of Nebraska, Iowa State University, Iowa Western Community College, the University of South Dakota, Morningside College, Hastings College, and Northwestern College. We have cooperated with researchers from Dana College, Northwestern College, and the University of Nebraska on research projects conducted on the refuge.

The *Bertrand* Collection is the basis for partnership and cooperation with a number of individuals and institutions. We have a Programmatic Agreement covering preservation of the collection with the national Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Iowa State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Officer. We loan *Bertrand* artifacts to other museums around the country. Recent requests have come from the Mystic Seaport Museum in Connecticut, the Western Heritage Museum in Omaha, and the Mark Twain Museum in Hannibal, Missouri. The Museum Curator also helps visiting researchers and provides technical assistance in response to inquiries from government agencies, museums, journalists and individual researchers from many states and Canada.

In a wider context, DeSoto staff have worked with and supported the Iowa Archaeological Society, Nebraska Historical Society and the Loess Hills Alliance in their respective efforts. We also look forward to cooperating with the Lewis and Clark Heritage Trail Foundation in the upcoming bicentennial commemoration of that pioneering expedition.

All in all, DeSoto NWR's partnering efforts well exemplify the mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: "*Working with others* to conserve, protect and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people" [italics added].

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is critical to successful implementation of this plan. Monitoring is necessary to evaluate the progress toward objectives and to determine if conditions are changing.

Accomplishment of the objectives described in this CCP will be monitored annually by the Refuge Manager's supervisor. Successful performance will be tied to the accomplishment of objectives that are scheduled for that year. The public will be informed about the activities of the refuge staff through an annual report that will be mailed to all persons on DeSoto NWR's mailing list and published on the refuge's website. In addition, the annual report's availability will be announced through news releases to the media. The annual report will be published each year in February.

The techniques and details for monitoring related to specific objectives will be specified in the Inventory and Monitoring Step-down Plan.



Substantial changes are likely to occur within the Service and the DeSoto community during the next 15 years. The Comprehensive Conservation Plan and its objectives will be examined at least every five years to determine if any modifications are necessary to meet these changing conditions.

In the interim, for planning and budgeting purposes, it will be necessary to measure pursuit of this plan's goals and objectives at intervals less than every five years. Therefore, DeSoto Refuge staff will assess the progress/status of each objective on at least an annual basis. Such assessments will be briefly recorded (100 words or less) and filed with the CCP. As appropriate, both qualitative and quantitative descriptions are recommended. These records might also be used in preparation of the Annual Narrative Reports.



Lamps in the *Bertrand* Collection
DeSoto NWR Visitor Center